

AN ADDRESS

ON THE SUBJECT OF

The Southwestern Railroad.

BY L. POPE,

Representative from Warren County.

Cincinnati, Louisville, Mobile, Charleston, Savannah, all interested.

I desire to direct the attention of the country to one of the most important railroads, not only to the State of Tennessee, but to the Union. The charter of this road extends from Danville, in the state of Kentucky, to McMinnville in Tennessee, connecting with the McMinnville and Manchester railroad, which will terminate on the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, near Winchester, connecting at that point with the Alabama railroad, coming up from Selma, on the Alabama river, about twelve hours run by steamboat above Mobile city. This is exciting more interest in the State of Alabama, than any other road in that State; and this is shown by the public journals, and efforts now being made in the Legislature of Alabama to appropriate seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars; and which has been appropriated as I am informed, for the completion of this road. The line is now being laid down from Selma in the direction of The Tennessee line; the work is pushed forward with great energy, and it may be considered as a fixed fact that this road from Selma to Winchester will be speedily completed.

Tennessee with equal spirit and generous magnanimity has taken up the line; and the General Internal Improvement bill, which has passed the House of Representatives and will doubtless pass the Senate, provides a loan of the State bonds, to the amount of eight thousand dollars per mile, to carry the road through the State of Tennessee, in the extension of the Kentucky line, so as to enable the company to connect at Danville with the railroad to that point from Cincinnati; thereby making by the various lines of railway which run in every direction from this point, a continuous line of railway from the lakes to the North, to the Gulf of Mexico on the South, running nearly a

direct line North and South, crossing at right angles every railroad running from East to West, and in its course running through four of the first States in the Union—Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, all of which will pour their commerce into the lap of Mobile, thus making her, as she is justly entitled to be by the energy and enterprise of her citizens, one of the first importing and exporting cities of the South; “her position is better situated for the Texas, Mexican, South American, and West India trade, than any other southern seaport. The usual class of vessels trading with the West Indies and the ports of the Gulf can always lie at the wharves of the city, and are not subject to the delay and expenses attending the towage up the swift current of the Mississippi. The sugar planters on the rivers and bays discharging into the Gulf from the Balize to the Sabine river, prefer to send the produce to Mobile rather than to New Orleans, for this reason.”

“Mobile is now the second cotton exporting city in the Union, therefore, as the terminus of a great railroad destined to supply with groceries and with foreign goods a vast extent of country, no position can be selected equal to hers.” By this line of railroad the fond hopes of the city will be realized in connecting herself with the great Northwest, and she will be enabled to bear away the palm of commerce from the Crescent city. This road will place the Queen City of the West, with her 150,000 population, and her millions of wealth and commerce within thirty-six hours of Mobile, avoiding all the dangers of the Mississippi River, with its disasters, delays and expenses; and nothing is hazarded in saying that the commerce of Cincinnati will save in one year, when this road is finished, an amount sufficient to grade the road half-way from Danville to Winchester, which is about 160 miles, several miles being in the State of Kentucky and ninety in the State of Tennessee.

This road not only affords the nearest connection with Mobile from Cincinnati, but also the nearest route to Charleston or Savannah, by way of Chattanooga. This is also the nearest route for Louisville to reach the Southern market; from Louisville to Danville the distance being estimated at seventy-five miles, from Danville to Winchester, by the Southwestern railway, 160 miles, making 235 miles from Louisville to Winchester by this route, when it is 275 miles by the way of Nashville to the same point, giving a difference of forty miles in favor of the Southwestern railroad. The difference in distance to Cincinnati is still greater. From Danville to Winchester, by Nashville, is about the same distance from Louisville, while from Danville to Winchester, by the Southwestern railroad, is only 160 miles, showing a difference of 110 miles from Cincinnati.

This road in Tennessee runs through the centre of the mountain district, which contains a population of 75,000, and upwards of ten millions of taxable property.

This road runs parallel with the Cumberland mountain, which makes an easy grade for the same, as it does not have, as does the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, to cross the range of mountains, and the way hills that always follow in that range. This portion of Tennessee

lamented Dr. Troost, (a man of genius and true son of science, and such a one as she would never blush to own,) has shown, is richer in mineral wealth than any portion of our State—immense coal beds are creeping out from nearly every hill-side, while iron ore and other minerals are found in abundance. This locality also furnishes the finest water power and manufacturing facilities anywhere to be found. Manufacturing establishments are now springing up in this section, and are carrying on their business with great success, making large profits on the capital invested.

The water power at the falls of Caney Fork, which will be near this road, has no equal in the South or West, being sufficient to turn five hundred thousand spindles, at the lowest stage of water, and with the same amount of steam power used at Lowell, they would be enabled, by using the same three months in the year, to propel one million of spindles, an amount sufficient to clothe the whole South and West. The estimate of this water power has been made by experienced manufacturers. There are many other water falls in this section; in fact there is not an area of five miles square, where there is not some bold mountain stream, that comes leaping down some craggy steep, as if fitted out by nature's hand to drive and propel machinery and when this line of railway is completed, by which the cotton fields of the South will be brought in the proximity to the manufactories of this region, where provisions are abundant and labor cheap, it will be the manufacturing district of our State; the busy pick axe and heavy forge hammer will be heard in our midst, while our streams and waterfalls will be made vocal with the music of clanking looms and whirling spindles, giving us that independence of northern manufacturers, which we so much need, and which is so much desired by every true Tennessean, and every true friend to the South.

Internal improvements and manufactures go hand in hand, while health, power and greatness follow in their train. The important question arises, can the work be accomplished? We assume to say it can. The road as before stated, is 160 miles in length, ninety miles in the State of Tennessee, and seventy miles in Kentucky. We may well calculate that this road will not cost as much per mile by 1800 as the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, which cost a little over fifteen thousand dollars per mile, there being no mountains to be cut at great cost and expense, as on the Chattanooga and Nashville line—the face of the country being much smoother, therefore grading is lighter, on account of running with the range of mountains and across them—then taking thirteen thousand dollars per mile as the probable cost of the road, the whole line would cost \$2,080,000; what are we now out of which to raise this money? We have ten millions of taxable property in the counties in Tennessee immediately interested in this road. By a law which has passed at the present session of the Legislature, each one of these counties by popular vote, can tax itself for railroad purposes; we readily see what a lever power this is in favor of internal improvements. It brings the united energies of a whole people to bear upon a particular work. Heretofore the railroad

orator, by the power of his argument, could only pick up, here and there, a scattering subscriber, among the thousands who were equally interested in the same work yet unwilling to share its burdens, but ever eager and ready to enjoy its blessings and fortunes; by this law the miser can be brought up side by side with a liberal, enterprising citizen, and the burden of the work will rest equally upon the shoulder of all, as all will share its benefits. Each tax-payer will receive a certificate of stock from the company, to the amount of the tax paid by him which certificate is made transferable, and also receivable on the road when completed for freight or passage, making it as good as so much cash to the holder. If the counties interested in this work agree to tax themselves the small sum of two per cent. for the railroad, this will amount to \$200,000 per annum. In three years the tax would amount to \$600,000, which could be paid as we see, and scarcely any man feel it. The money would be spent in the midst of those from whom it is collected and by the time the work is done, the money will have found its way back again into the pockets from whence it was taken. And this is the great secret why a people's means are not exhausted and their energies paralyzed in the construction of railroads. The farmer who has one thousand dollars worth of land, will have to pay in the three years, by tax of two per cent, the sum of sixty dollars, or twenty dollars per year and at the end of the three years, will find most of his sixty dollars in his purse and his certificate of stock worth the full amount of the tax he has paid, and his land increased in value to two thousand dollars. Has he not made money? There are in the counties of Franklin, Coffee, Grundy, Warren, Van Buren, White, De Kalb, Fentress, Jackson and Overton, upwards of four millions acres of land, and an increased value of one dollar per acre would amount to upwards of four millions of dollars, twice the amount it would cost to build the whole road. And who supposes, cut off as this section of country is now from market, that the road when constructed, by which the resources of the country are developed, cars going laden from our midst with the production of our soil and industry to the markets where the toils of the husbandman and manufacturer will receive remunerating rewards, and bringing back upon the returning train the comforts, luxuries and delicacies of life at reduced prices, that the lands of these counties, will not be increased one dollar per acre in value. And take the sum of \$600,000 raised by tax and add the sum of \$720,000, the amount loaned by the State, and we have \$1,320,000, leaving only \$760,000 to be raised by the citizens of Kentucky and Cincinnati, who are deeply interested. We have Cincinnati, and Lexington, which is the centre of the stock growing portion of Kentucky, and can, with the facilities afforded by this road, successfully compete with Louisville in the pork packing trade, and Danville, and the counties along the line, raise the means to build this several miles of road to the Tennessee line? To suppose that they will not when their ability is unquestioned, is to suppose that the governing principle of all human action—self interest—is to be changed, and to lose its influence over men. As before stated, this road will place Cincinnati withing thirty-six hours of Mobile; the trip between Mobile

New Orleans is made in 14 hours; by this road the transit from Cincinnati to New Orleans could be made in fifty hours, only a little more than one-third of the time now required by the river route, and in one-fourth of the time now required to go to Mobile by the way of New Orleans. But the saving of distance and time is still more apparent when we consider that the greater amount of produce sent from the States of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, is intended for the central portion of Georgia and Alabama, and which is now compelled to take the circuitous route of the Mississippi to New Orleans, thence across Mobile, and up the Alabama river to its destination in the central part of the State; or perhaps shipped from New Orleans around Key West to Savannah or Charleston, thence transmitted by railroad, running out from these places to the interior of the country; when it will be seen that by the Southwestern railroad, the central portion of Alabama and Georgia can be reached in from twenty to thirty hours.

There can be no question, then, that the greatest part of the travel arriving at Cincinnati; from the North and Northwest, destined for the South, will take the action of this railroad; and the same remark may be applied to the travel and light loads going North. We assert further, and we think it might be proved, that this road will obtain a large portion of the heavy goods and produce which now have to wait the rising of waters, and the breaking up of ice; to support this assertion, reference is made to the successful competition by railroads running along the banks of navigable rivers. Until within the last few years the produce which passed to and from the upper part of Georgia, was transported on the Savannah river—it is now nearly all carried on the South Carolina railroads. The Central and Monroe railroads, terminating at Savannah, have taken away the freight from the Ocmulgee and Altamaha rivers. The successful competition of the Philadelphia and Reading railroad with the Schuylkill canal, is familiar to all. And the railroad running along the banks of the Hudson river, which affords the safest and best river navigation in the world, is a remarkable instance of the superiority and success of road transportation, over river navigation.

To form a correct estimate of the amount of freight and the number of passengers which will be conveyed on this road is extremely difficult; and hence equally difficult is it to make an estimate of the annual income. There are circumstances which will favorably affect the trade and travel of this road, which do not influence and which cannot be secured by any other road of similar extent and practicability of location. These circumstances should alone induce its construction. We refer to the fact that it extends from the South to the North—for we speak of it as one line—through different degrees of temperature, through different varieties of soil, mineral and agricultural productions. It commences at a point near the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, celebrated for its health and accessible at all seasons of the year to the sugar lands of Louisiana, and of Texas, to the tropical regions of Florida, Cuba and the Islands of the Caribbean sea, and to the varied and rich lands of Mexico and South America, whose trade is fast becoming a matter of the highest importance—and also to Tehuantepec, through which passes the gold of California, and will pass the teas and silks of China. It extends northwardly, by the *shortest route which can be selected*, through the richest corn and cotton lands in the Union. To increase the facilities for intercourse between the central producing regions of the South and West and the seaboard should be the object of every one, for provisions of all kinds, corn, grain, &c., as well as a regulated commerce, demand that constant and rapid means of transportation and of communication should be at command. In this respect the railroad is far superior to all other modes.

“Setting aside the peculiar advantages above enumerated, and judging of this road as we do of others, we are satisfied that it must yield a handsome interest, on the capital invested in it, from the fact that all the railroads in the United States, which

have been properly conducted, and which have not fallen into the hands of stock-jobbers and land speculators, have been successful, and have paid a good interest on the capital, and at the end of each succeeding year have shown a constant increase of business, and a proportionate yield of nett income beyond all calculation."

As a work of great national importance, no man can estimate it too highly, as affording a cheap, prompt and quick conveyance for the mail, and in time of war for troops, provisions and money, between the extreme parts of our country; with one arm entwined around the Lakes of the North, the other resting on the Gulf of Mexico in the South, and like a rainbow of peace spanning this Union, binding and cementing the States together. If the British Lion should be aroused from his slumber of peace with this government, and should attempt to stretch his powerful arm across the Canadian line, and with his heavy paw seek to strangle down our brethren of the North, quick as the iron horse could run, the bold Southerner from his cotton field would fly to our Northern border, and with his blood boiling warm through his veins, he would stand ready to repel the invading foe, and to protect the honor of the American flag. Equal facilities would also be afforded to protect our Southern cities.

When we look at the progress of railroads in the last twenty years, we can have but little doubt as to the success of this enterprise. Twenty years ago we did not have 200 miles of railroad in operation in the United States, now we have 12,000 miles; and when we look forward to the result of the next twenty years, our bosoms swell with pride, and our minds are filled with bright hopes of the future; and utopian as it may seem to others, I look forward to the great day in American history, when we will present to the gaze of an admiring world, the bright spectacle of a nation of scholars, and a nation of freemen—when all this vast country, from the thunders of Niagara on the North, to the stormy Gulf on the South, from the city dotted shore of the Atlantic on the East, to where the God of Day takes his last majestic step down the Western slope, and pillows his weary head upon the soft bosom of the Pacific wave, will be bound together by a perfect web of railroads, connecting every important city and town, equalizing labor and developing the resources of this growing, prosperous and happy continent; and along each line of railway will go the telegraphic wires, and then great thoughts will scarcely be conceived, great events will scarcely happen, until they will fly away upon the lightning's wing, and the nation will know them—then the American heart will beat at the same time, to the same cause, objects and interests, and we will be bound together, like the face of our country, in iron bonds of Union, which a world united could not sever.

May we not call upon Cincinnati, Lexington, Danville, the counties of Cassey, Lincoln, Russell, Pulaski, Adair, Cumberland, Clinton and Wayne, and to the people of the *Mountain District* in Tennessee, to arouse themselves to the importance of this enterprise, and to go boldly forward to its accomplishment,—they have but to *will it*, and it *will* be done, for the finger of nature points this out as the great railway line of communication from North to South—it *must* and will be finished.

LEVANDER POPE.

an extract of a letter from Dr. Lindsey, one of the professors in the Medical College at Nashville, a good Geologist, and well acquainted with all the Geological views of Dr. Troost.

DR. POPE:—*Dear Sir:*—The country through which the Southwestern Railroad passes, lies at the base of the Cumberland mountain, which mountain range is the great coal field of Tennessee. Dr. Troost, in his third report, (made as long ago as 1845,) gives a brief description of this coal field, and says that from his analysis, "it appears that the coal is of a superior quality." From personal observation in traveling through that region, I doubt not, that a complete Geological survey would prove it to be rich in mineral resources as it is in agricultural and manufacturing facilities.

Very Respectfully, Yours, &c.,

J. B. LINDSEY.

